

## Classis Huron Safe Church Committee Report, February 16, 2022

**Mandate:** Classis Huron Safe Church Committee is mandated:

1. To function as an Abuse Response Team according to Synodical Guidelines (as annotated for Classis Huron).
2. To provide comprehensive and on-going education and support to our churches in the prevention of and response to abuse.
3. To provide support to our churches in the prevention of, and response to abuse.

### Membership Update:

At our last meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup> we warmly welcomed Tiffany Craig representing Trinity CRC Goderich. Tiffany is replacing Laura Duckworth who has taken on new responsibilities in her church. We are very thankful for Laura's many years of dedication and contributions to the work of our Safe Church Committee.

We are currently in need of a rep from the Acton church as Brian Smith has moved to a new position in Mitchell.

### Updates from the office of Safe Church Ministries



NOW AVAILABLE FOR CONGREGATIONS

### Safe Church Assessment Introduction and Instructions

How safe is your church? This assessment tool is designed to help councils:

- Assess how safe their particular congregation is from abuse in all its forms
- Reflect on what steps the leadership might take to nurture a culture that resists abuse in their congregation.

[Take the Assessment Today!](#)

## **Abuse of Power**

When the COD met in June 2021, in lieu of Synod, it instructed the Executive Director to make recommendations to the COD for improving the appeal process. The context for the mandate was a concern that the appeal process as described in Church Order Article 30a isn't particularly well-suited to deal with cases involving allegations of abuse. In response, Executive Director Colin Watson appointed a small task force to work on this mandate.

Over the past few months, the task force has met several times and we are making good progress identifying places where the appeal process seems especially weak in effecting a just and compassionate response to allegations of abuse. What has been particularly helpful for our discussions has been hearing from those of you who have been involved in an appeal process regarding allegations of abuse. If you would like to share your thoughts, experiences, and/or ideas, we would certainly welcome your input. In order to facilitate this, Safe Church has set up a [google form](#) that will allow you to submit your comments anonymously and confidentially. Alternatively, if you would rather speak with someone about this, feel free to call Amanda Benckhuysen at 616-240-8155. Your voice is important and we want to hear from you!

## **Annual Inter-Classis Safe Church Conference**

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we are once more unable to have our Annual March Inter-Classis Safe Church Training Event in person. We have however, arranged for two zoom events which are very relevant to today's time. We invite you to join us for one or both of these events.

The first event is a virtual tour of the former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School, presented by the Woodland Cultural Centre (Brantford ON).

The second presentation, by Priya Andrade (the interim Canadian Justice and Reconciliation Mobilizer Indigenous Ministry, CRCNA), will focus on CRC's engagement in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action in Canada by repenting and lamenting it's role in the cultural violence committed towards Indigenous Peoples.

The training events will be held on **Saturday March 5, 2022** and, although **the event is free, registration is required.**

Please visit the website below for information about the workshops and speakers, and to register for the event.

<https://www.wmott.ca/scc/regn.php>

We covet your prayers for the success of this event.

Respectfully submitted

Atie Ott

Coordinator

Classis Huron Safe Church Committee